



# Committee On Finance

Max Baucus, Ranking Member

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**Baucus Meets with Japanese Ambassador to Discuss Ban on U.S. Beef**  
*Senator Urges Resumption in U.S. Beef Exports to Japan*

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) Today, Senator Max Baucus, Ranking Member of the Senate Finance Committee, co-hosted a meeting with Finance Committee Chairman Charles Grassley for Senators to meet with Japanese Ambassador Ryozo Kato to urge Japan to lift its ban on U.S. beef exports. Senator Baucus has been a leading voice in pushing to reopen Japan's market to U.S. beef. He visited Japan in March of last year, soon after the ban was imposed, and discussed the issue with Japanese leaders.

"It's imperative that we stay on top of this issue. Beef is an important export product for Montana, and Japan is historically the largest export market. The Japanese are working to lift the ban, but there is a sense – even among some Japanese – that the sluggish pace of progress so far is driven more by politics than science," Baucus said. "This meeting will help underscore how serious I and other members of Congress are about this issue."

Senators Grassley and Baucus arranged the private meeting between the Senators and the Ambassador to allow Senators to have a candid discussion with the Ambassador on the status of the resumption of beef trade with Japan.

"The Ambassador assured us that progress is being made. He said that Japan intends to allow beef from cattle under 20 months of age to enter its borders after its rulemaking process is complete," Baucus said. "I will continue to follow this situation to make sure the resumption in beef trade happens as soon as possible."

Japan was the largest importer of U.S. beef before Japan banned the importation of U.S. beef after the discovery of a Canadian-born BSE-infected dairy cow in Washington state in 2003. Japan imported \$1.3 billion of U.S. beef in that year alone.

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